

How About It, Mr. Turner?

President Carter has demonstrated a unique diligence in choosing his cabinet members. He sought the opinion of seasoned politicians and leaders of segments of the American public, and he interviewed several candidates before making his final choice.

We believe that the same process was followed in the case of Admiral Stansfield Turner, nominated to head the Central Intelligence Agency. It is therefore our intention neither to question Turner's abilities nor to doubt Carter's wisdom of choice. We are, however, concerned by an apparent incompatibility in the ideals and principles of the two men as revealed by their words and deeds.

Throughout his Presidential campaign Carter emphasized that his foreign policy would depart from that of his two predecessors in that it would have a moral substratum that would not yield to political or military expediency.

In the specific case of the Turkish occupation of Cyprus, Carter illustrated his adherence to moral principle by stating that the U.S. law (which was violated by Turkey and which provides that military aid to Turkey must therefore be suspended) ought to be upheld and that the U.N. resolutions on Cyprus should be implemented. These resolutions call for the removal of all foreign troops from Cyprus.

Carter's running mate, Senator Mondale, said during the televised Vice-Presidential debate that the U.S. should not have turned its back to Greece after the summer of 1974, when the junta fell and democracy was restored. He promised that a Carter-Mondale Administration would help Greece arrive at a fair and just resolution of the Cyprus problem.

During that time Admiral Turner, then NATO's southern commander, was busy (along with the Secretary General of NATO, Luns) arguing Turkey's military importance to NATO and urging a complete lifting of the Turkish arms embargo, despite existing American laws and despite Turkey's continuing violation of human rights on Cyprus. In fact, after the presidential election and before Inauguration Day, Turner urged that the President-elect move quickly to obtain Congressional approval for the four-year military agreement between the U.S. and Turkey which had been worked out by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

In doing so, Turner disregarded not only moral principles, U.S. laws and the U.N. Charter, but he also ignored Article 1 as well as the stated principles of the NATO Charter — the alliance in which he was holding a key post. Article 1 prohibits the "use of force" in international disputes, and the principles of NATO declare support of "democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law," as well as opposition to aggression.

From the post of head of the CIA, the director will be in a position to give influential advice to the President on crucial foreign policy decisions. It seems important that the person who holds that post adheres to the same moral standard set up by Carter himself. Turner's recent position on military aid to Turkey eloquently demonstrates that he has failed that test in at least that case.

Has Turner reformed in this short time, and is he now willing to place moral principle and existing laws above military expedience as he perceives it? Or has the President changed his stated views on morality in foreign policy, and is he now excluding the much-suffered island of Cyprus from the set of issues in which moral leadership and moral responsibility ought to be demonstrated by the Carter Administration?

—Telemachos C. Mouschovias